true George Washington” — “one of the noblest and greatest men who ever lived.” Thus he traveled much the same road and arrived at much the same destination as Rupert Hughes, W. E. Woodward and even Bernhard Knollenberg. He wants Washington to be known and appreciated as a human being. So he believes him to have been in love with another man’s wife, fond of gambling, capable of smuggling, greedy for land, critical of his mother, sometimes sharp with creditors, ambitious, “sympathetic with sinners, for he was not himself immune to temptations, nor did he always behave as his conscience would have liked him to do.”

Let it be repeated that there is nothing shockingly new about these complaints. Mr. Flexner at the end of his script concedes: “There is something pitiful in the hero, as he rides away to immortality,” but he does not tell his readers what that “something pitiful” was. The reason, it seems, is that he does not know. Washington still is a mystery, just as Jesus and Buddha, Lao-tse and Confucius, Mohammed and the other mighty ones “in moral reformation” were. It is possible to be dogmatic about him only as it is possible to be dogmatic about Shakespeare and Beethoven, Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci.

Perhaps it would have helped Mr. Flexner if he had made better use of William Alfred Bryan’s George Washington in American Literature, 1775-1865, published in 1952. Also, scholars interested in biographies of Washington should know about a constructive study submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Pittsburgh for the degree of Master of Arts in 1929. The author is the Reverend Isaac Noble Dundore, presently a Lutheran minister at Brownsville, Pennsylvania.

The Historical Society
of Western Pennsylvania

James Waldo Fawcett


It has long been thought by the reviewer that the best training for historiography is prior specialization in English. Dr. Wallace, “for
many years... a professor of English in Lebanon Valley College, is a notable exemplification of the idea. Actually he has become the leading living authority on Pennsylvania history, more especially on the colonial period. His historical output in the last two decades is too well known to call for designation. This volume adds further to his reputation for energy, interest, arduous activity, excellent organization of materials and insight into significance.

And all of the author's qualifications were required for this latest of his scholarly enterprises. That it was difficult is modestly admitted by the great authoritative scholar. Aware of the difficulties of the subject he boldly assumed the responsibility of setting forth the best possible treatment of a most interesting and important Pennsylvania historical matter.

A most valuable "Key to the Indian Paths of Pennsylvania" is used both at the beginning and at the end of the volume. The author doubtless felt that the geography involved was a primary consideration, one not easily mastered. The matter of geographical difficulty appears in the "List of Paths by County," p. 227. The numerous maps of individual paths are also a fortification of the idea of the importance of geographical features.

The author's concept of his subject appears particularly in his brilliant Introduction of sixteen double-column pages, in his Biographical Note (p. 213), in Appendices III and V, and in scattered footnotes.

Probably because of the total lack of any possibly better system the Indian Paths are organized alphabetically, a matter of some discomfiture to the general reader, though of benefit to a particular researcher. The least satisfactory of the items was Appendix III, "The Two Licks," where more commentary and notes on the map seemed necessary.

Relatively careful reading of the volume revealed to the reviewer no noticeable errors of fact, grammar, rhetoric or typography. With such authorship and sponsorship this was to be expected.

This is a publication of absolutely certain value for a long period of time. It is well worth its price and will find many purchasers and readers.

Professor Emeritus     Alfred P. James
University of Pittsburgh